

Washington D.C.


June 20th 1866.

Hon. James A. Garfield
of Ohio.

Dear Sir:

I sent you the other day a few bottles of our native California wine, merely for the purpose of showing you that we are not, like the old foggy, looking out from behind the times; though it is possible we may get knocked in the head by a passing event.

Such wine as this is calculated to strengthen the judgement and satisfy the most sceptical gentleman in the Walls of Congress of the impotency of taxing an interest of such vast prospective utility to the human race. Why, Sir, it would be murder in the first degree to strangle this infant giant of Temperance, now innocently disporting himself in his cradle. Tax crime, if you please; tax the light of woman's eye; tax the light of other days; tax your own ingenuity; tax human forbearance; tax Patience sitting on a monument weeping at grief; tax war, hacks,



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sacks, backs, tacks; took a tax on all attacks on tax; but don't, I beseech you, tax such a heritage as this - the generous grape - the grape with which you may be shot ~~with~~ every day of your life, yet never hurt.

Sir, I hope it is not in your heart to crush this innocent babe when it comes back to the House, appealing in plaintive accents to the tenderest sympathies of your nature. I trust you will take it by the hand with fatherly care, and say - "go forth, little one, and grow and flourish and give health and happiness to the human race."

Sir, the tears stand in my eyes when I picture to myself the stunted and wretched little hunchback that gentlemen in your House would make of this infant prodigy. Think of it yourself - as a father and a man! Staggering with five cents a gallon on its back through the desolated vineyards of California! Think of it as a Christian: "in the morning it groweth up like a flower; in the evening it withereth away."

I will not believe you can do such

violence to human nature. No, Sir, it is not
in that genial eye and generous face of yours
to do it.

I take it for granted you have tried the
Port. Sailors tell you, "any Port in a Storm";
but I can assure you amid the storms of
legislation, there is no Port like Wilson's native
brand. Go into that, Sir, and you will find it
a haven of rest—

"A halcyon for the sick and care
A balm for a bosom in sorrow."

Lest you should doubt what I say,
I send you a copy of my travels in the East
as a kind of certificate of character. Read
that and you will find that a strict adherence
to facts is my strong point. I never stretch
the truth, but paint it just as it is—"Strange,
stranger than fiction."

Yours very truly,
J. Ross Browne
City of Oakland,
State of California.

